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ABSTRACT

A workshop supported by the Council of Europe's Project No. 7 for representatives of supervisory staff for the teaching of languages and culture of origin from Algeria, Italy, and Portugal focused on cultural diversity as contributed by migrants' children in day-to-day classroom work and in the curricula and subject-matter of primary teaching as a whole. Six major papers were presented and discussed. Paper topics included (1) the work of the Council of Europe's project for the educational and cultural development of migrants, (2) intercultural education, (3) interculturality and the logic of learning, (4) the intercultural approach and art education, (5) culture and language learning, and (6) history and the intercultural approach. Issues discussed included the types of connection which define the intercultural approach, links between the Council of Europe project and possibilities of application in member countries, the attitude of European countries to intercultural education, how cultural practices can be objectivised, and the manner of language acculturation. Names and addresses of the 13 foreign participants are provided. (NEC)

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The CDCC's Project No. 7:
"The education and cultural development of migrants"

Recognition of cultural diversity in the teaching of school subjects

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Council for Cultural Co-operation
School Education Division

Strasbourg 1987

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The CDCC's Project No. 7:
"The education and cultural development of migrants"

Recognition of cultural diversity in the teaching of school subjects

Training course held in Paris from 27 to 30 January 1986

Final report

by Iva Cintrat

The views expressed in this document are those of the author
and do not necessarily reflect those
of the Council for Cultural Co-operation

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Strasbourg 1987

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COURSE PROGRAMME

Monday 27 January

10 am

- Opening and introduction, presentation of course organisers and participants by Madame Michelle Huart, Chargée de mission, Directorate General of School Teaching and Directorate of Schools, Ministry of National Education.

- Paper by Mr Louis Porcher, Professor, Paris III

Presentation of the work of the Council of Europe

- Debate

2 pm

- General discussion, allowing all course members to see where they stand in regard to the objectives of the course.

- Presentation of course arrangements by the organisers.

- Paper by Mr Marcel Leurin, Inspector in charge of schooling for migrants' children.

Ministry of National Education - Brussels.

Intercultural education

- Debate

Tuesday 28 January

9 am

- Paper by Mr Jean-Claude Morice, Professor of Fine Arts at the Training Centre for Departmental Education Inspectors.

The intercultural approach and art education

Practical work

- Discussion

2 pm

- Paper by Mr Michel Field, Professor of Philosophy at the Primary Teachers Training School at Versailles.

Interculturality and the logic of learning

- Paper interspersed with discussions with course members.

Wednesday 29 January

9 am

- Paper by Mr Daniel Coste, teacher-researcher at CREDIF, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud.

Culture and language learning

- Paper interspersed with discussions with course members.

2 pm

- Continuation of discussion with Daniel Coste, on the production of teaching material. Details of the CREDIF project for producing multimedia and multilevel material.

- Group work, under the direction of J C Canton.

Functioning and classroom implementation of the «threshold level», document produced by CREDIF.

- Summary of work and discussion with all course members.

Thursday 30 January

9 am

Division of course members into two mixed groups.

Group 1, under the direction of Mrs Marianne Field.

History and the intercultural approach

Second group, under the direction of Mr Jean-Claude Canton.

Analysis and implementation of the threshold level (end).

10.30 am

Exchange of groups.

2 pm

- Division of course members into groups by category, to sketch out training projects for the staff in their charge.

3 pm

- Pooling of the groups' proposals.

Summary of course.

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OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

Michelle Huart

The teacher training projects organised at national level are now centred on the sectors that have been given priority in ministerial policy. They are regarded not only as providing information and personal training, but also as vocational training work, as «levers» for the improvement of quality in the school. Thus the inclusion of this course in the programme of the Ministry of National Education is particularly significant.

It is explained by:

- the publication of the new instructions for elementary schools (1).

- the publication of the report of Professor Berque's Committee (2), which gave rise to a Declaration by the Minister of National Education (3). This is a highpoint in the study of immigration-linked education problems, on the basis of which a plan of action has been drawn up which reactivates the incorporation of this field in the education system as a whole.

- Purpose of course:

The work referred to led to the planning of a training session dealing with the problem of schooling for migrants' children from a new standpoint. Instead of, as so often in the past, considering either the teaching of French, or the teaching of the language and culture of origin, in isolation (quite legitimate and necessary, although partial, approaches), we sought to take account of cultural diversity (particularly as contributed by migrants' children) in day-to-day classroom work and in the curricula and subject-matter of primary school teaching as a whole. This course is an operation supported by the Council of Europe. It is a workshop connected with the Project Group No.7, which will be presented by Louis Porcher.

- The team which will lead and organise the session consists of:

Marianne Field
Jean Gaillard
Jean-Claude Canton,

who are departmental inspectors of national education (IDEN) professionally involved in the field which concerns us through their daily practice, research and training work.

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(1) Elementary School. Curricula and instructions CNCP - paperback - 1985.

(2) Jacques Berque, Immigration in the schools of the Republic - Documentation Française, August 1985.

(3) Press conference by Mr Jean-Pierre Chevènement, Minister of National Education, Thursday 19 December 1985.

Course target group:

IDEN (Departmental Inspectors of National Education)
PEN (Teacher Training School Tutors), Educational Counsellors
CEFISEM tutors (Centre for Training and Information on the Schooling of Migrants' Children).

Guests: representatives of supervisory staff for the teaching of languages and cultures of origin. Three countries are represented: Algeria, Italy, Portugal. They were chosen either because they represent the largest immigrant communities or because they have long experience of organising the teaching of the language and culture of origin, but also because their teaching establishments are at present among the most highly organised.

The presence of these guests reflects a wish to incorporate as effectively as possible the teaching of the language and culture of origin in ordinary school life for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

Session, course, workshop, operation ... it is really more like a seminar. The contributions and exchanges will assist us in devising other training projects; this is the objective of a national operation, which should help in planning and introducing other practices in the elementary schools.

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PAPERS

Louis Porcher: Presentation of the work of the Council of Europe

- Project «The educational and cultural development of migrants»

The project, of which our work is part and which is now nearing completion, is entitled: «the educational and cultural development of migrants». As this project followed up the work on the training of teachers concerned with migrants' children, the approach was, in all logic (a somewhat mechanical logic) the same, viz an intercultural approach .

The administrative text which governed the group's work was interpreted strictly:

- the group was to concern itself not only with the problems of children but also with those of adults;

- it was to deal not only with teaching, but also with cultural problems outside the educational context, that is to say cultural practices.

These were bases on the negotiation which led to an initial decision by the group: to concern itself with connections rather than with self-contained areas.

The group agreed to consider three essential types of connection:

- between family and school

- between cultural practices in the school and cultural practices in society in general

- between teaching children and training adults.

To elucidate each of these points, three procedures were used:

- case studies: some twenty successful experiments, located in different countries, were studied by a representative of the group (not a national of the country in which the experiments were conducted) and a detailed account of their findings was published. A comparison of these experiments revealed, not so much what they had in common, as the conditions for transfer to other European areas.

- visits: groups qualified in differing and complementary fields observed experiments which were themselves of a composite nature (eg Coventry).

- studies: specialists were called on, in Strasbourg, to clarify obscurities: for example, the concept, or notion, of «immigrant culture», which cannot be expressed in terms of either culture of origin or of host culture.

- the intercultural hypothesis

At Louis Porcher's suggestion, the group refused to propose a definition of intercultural, which ran the risk of breaking up the momentum of their work.

It therefore settled for stating a number of features which, in its view, constituted the intercultural approach on the understanding that this was an option and not a scientific demonstration.

1. Societies are multicultural.

2. The same applies to the school, and, in general, to cultural institutions.

3. Cultures, in this multicultural situation, are of equal dignity.

4. In the intercultural approach the emphasis is on the connections between the components of multicultural situations, as opposed to the multicultural approach, which is a matter of juxtaposition.

Societies are multicultural:

- this means that several cultures co-exist in them.

- societies are always multicultural, even native cultures, and we find dominant models in them (thus a distinction can be made between feminine culture and masculine culture, child culture and adult culture, occupational cultures, sociological cultures - workers/management, rural/urban etc).

Activities, educational or other, are conducted within this diversity. Identities and differences are seen only in relation to one another. Thus, to understand the position of migrants' children, we must also take account of the fact that they are children and have the distinctive characteristics of children.

- Findings:

. Extreme diversity of situations

. Paramount role of the organisation of teaching and training institutions. The schools, linked to a national system, operate in accordance with specific, internal laws, which nationals find it difficult to see objectively (for example, the notion of a national curriculum is incomprehensible in a decentralised country). Teaching would therefore stand to gain from a clarification of the effects of the dominant organisational models in a given country.

- One never meets people who are not in a «field» and we all agree on the object to be achieved: «to work for the field». But if the main characteristic of a field is diversity, has the generic concept of the field any meaning?

- What is the relation between education and teaching? Teachers are in a field, which is not that of teaching, but which is defined in relation to teaching. The teacher therefore tends to speak on behalf of the field, which becomes an argument. But is the field as defined by the discourse that in which the discourse is conducted?

The concept of the field is therefore both omnipresent and evanescent. Yet until it has been defined, we do not know what a transferable education is. This is a crucial point, for it is here that the issues are defined, both for the operators in the field and for the recipients: the school children.

Example of a difficulty: an analysis of the French statistics shows that, for a comparable social category, the success of foreign children is comparable to that of French children. It might be concluded that there is no foreign children's problem - and that the social factor is the only determinant. In fact, identity of social environment and performance does not mean identity of learning processes. It may be that the social factor is the decisive factor but it is not perhaps the only one. The concept of failure or success at school has therefore to be worked out.

This being so, how are we to formulate teaching strategies? How to teach for diversity? What is the meaning of the central concept of negotiation? This comes down to defining the supply/demand link. If we focus on demand, without offering supply, we abandon the demander to the production conditions of his demand. The main demand is for certification, for external validation of learning. The social force of the diploma is preferred to the content of the teaching. We must therefore address ourselves to the organisational methods of teaching and make them valuable in terms of social transference. In France, the recent introduction of first and second university degrees in French as a foreign language is one of the ways of giving social legitimacy to the problem. The teaching of French should be similarly validated, pedagogic training not being added purely and simply to academic training.

The «magnifying effect» of the study of the specific target groups of an institution brings out the practical aspect of the system. Through the problem of migrant children, we discover its main components - in particular its exclusion and promotion components. That is not to reduce it to a common place problem, but to emphasise that questions of classroom methodology are in second place - not secondary - to analysis of the functions of the system.

Points for discussion

- The types of connection which define the intercultural approach

To succeed in establishing connections, we require an objective perception of dominance relations on a given point. This may consist in analysing, in particular, what Bourdieu calls «practical hopes». What is, for example, the probability that foreign languages learnt in secondary schools will be useful in terms of certification and of practical use? On the basis of our analysis we have to propose types of action which help the learner to become aware of this possible utilisation.

The position of principle is to create an awareness that the dominant values have been inwardly assimilated, the tactical position being not to reduce the intercultural to the multicultural.

- Links between the Council of Europe project and the possibilities of application in member countries, with particular regard to innovatory intercultural experiments.

Michelle Huart made the point that the study carried out by the CDCC Project Group was not conceived as a prescription for implementation, but that the organisation of this session in connection with the group's work and the presence at this national course of experts from the group showed how that study helped to clarify the options taken at national level and could help to formulate practices. A distinction should moreover be made between the teaching of the languages and cultures of the countries of origin, which was conducted within a specific framework connected with bilateral agreements, and the intercultural option, which opened up a wider prospect encompassing all pupils and the different subjects of study.

L Porcher. The project group was constantly at grips with problems of a more or less general nature bound up with national situations. It was interesting to observe the diversity of the situations.

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Marcel Leurin: Intercultural education

Project No.7 of the Council of Europe sought the tactical and permanent elimination of the multicultural, the side-by-side concept, in order to aim at the intercultural approach. If we avoid the word «interculturalism» it is because it might give the impression that there is an established doctrine. The word intercultural has been attached to many substantives, in many contexts, and has been associated with different and contradictory contents.

It would therefore be useful to demarcate it more closely - even if we wish to approach the matter through the different school subjects - and to go beyond the folklore aspects to which it is still too often confined. It is indeed particularly urgent to have an unequivocal perception of the term in view of the resurgence, in France and elsewhere, of xenophobia and racism.

The Council of Europe is one of the places where thought is being given to the intercultural concept.

In the Council for Cultural Co-operation within the Directorate of Culture, the group of experts «Training of teachers responsible for the education of migrant workers' children», chaired by Micheline Rey, has produced a booklet the first pages of which sum up the concept of the intercultural approach.

Project No.7, directed by L Porcher, is approaching completion. The studies which have been carried out will be continued, after the dissolution of the group, in ten seminars to disseminate its findings, of which this course is one. Other seminars have already taken place. The booklet: «Querying the intercultural approach» is an account of one of them, held in Brussels on 21 and 22 September 1984. It contains a new contribution, by Virginio Baio, who analyses the intercultural approach from the Lacan point of view: our interior conflicts stem from the intercultural approach, which is inwardly assimilated by each of us.

The intercultural approach and assimilation

The work done in the Council of Europe condemns any policy of assimilation. Only negotiation can solve the difficulties arising from the cohabitation of cultures. Assimilation knows and produces nothing but violence.

Intercultural education is not concerned with migrants only: it concerns the whole of society. This means that we should, each of us, take a fresh look at ourselves and become aware of our interdependence which precludes nationalism, as it does any form of withdrawal into oneself or into the group to which one belongs.

Intercultural education concerns all children, all teachers, all school subjects, all host countries and all countries of origin.

Is this then an argument for cultural cross-breeding?

No. No one, from an intercultural point of view, should renounce his own characteristics. We must each of us be ourselves, while taking others into account. Of course, some changes of outlook take place automatically, through restaurants, holidays, television, reading etc, but it seems there are thresholds which we hesitate to cross. It is not a question of relinquishing one's cultural characteristics, but of understanding what is done elsewhere. We do not know what cultures would result from the mixture, but it is important to know that the group to which one belongs is neither the centre nor the summit of the world. It is therefore a plea for the relativity of knowledge and of points of view.

These reflections certainly have a moralising side. But the intercultural approach is in fact the only objective solution to our present problems.

To give an example, in Brussels one person in four is a foreigner. 46% of primary school children in the Brussels district are foreigners. One school in three in this district has at least 50% of Moroccan pupils, and they can account for up to 82% of the pupils in a school.

An examination of the age pyramid of most municipalities in the Brussels district shows that the Belgian population is being renewed mainly through foreign contributions. The foreigners of today are the Belgians of tomorrow. They must be integrated harmoniously. The policy of rejecting them if they refuse to be simply carbon copies of the native population - assimilation - is a form of violence; and violence begets violence in a vicious circle.

Intercultural education is not a new subject added to the others, but a new approach to all subjects. Inequalities are not only economic, they are also cultural, and we must find ways and means of offsetting them.

Nor is the intercultural approach a neutral concept, equally acceptable to all. In Beyond Culture, the sociologist E T Hal shows that there are societies with a poor or rich cultural fabric. In the latter, the behavioural fetters of the individual are strictly determined and coded by religion and social impregnation. On the other hand in societies with a poor cultural fabric, like western societies, individual responsibility is much greater. Thus, in a school in which groups of different origins exist side by side, behaviour in an intercultural situation takes very different forms.

What is the attitude of the European countries to intercultural education?

- Directive No.77/486 of the European Economic Community, of July 1977, is a supranational law which enjoins member states to promote the teaching of the language and culture of origin of migrant workers' children, in order to make it easier for them to return to their countries if that should later happen.

- The Ministers of Education of the member countries of the Council of Europe unanimously adopted a resolution (Resolution No.1) in Dublin, in May 1983, advocating education of an intercultural nature.

- In September 1984, a Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe advocated the training of teachers from an intercultural standpoint. All the countries subscribed to it, except the United Kingdom, which reserved the right to comply or not to comply with the recommendation.

- Back in 1981, the Netherlands Parliament adopted a text advocating the development of intercultural education in the school system. In February 1985, Sweden took the decision to adopt the intercultural approach as the basic concept in schools.

- The interim report by L Porcher gives an account of the debate between the advocates of specific teaching and those who believe in immersion in ordinary classes, with support structures for adaptations. The conclusion was that migrants' children should not be treated in a special way; which does not exclude recourse to compensatory measures, particularly in regard to language.

The need for cultural identity is fundamental. Everybody must have roots. Some people set this need against practical requirements, but why establish a hierarchy? We must not give preference to some over others.

> «Outlooks, or ways of looking at life, are always the filter through which the learner receives instruction or perceives a cultural activity. It is therefore essential to take account of them and, more particularly, to refrain from behaving as if they were the same for everyone. They differ widely according to cultural background and, this being so, migrants are particularly concerned, insofar as their outlooks are often markedly different from those of the host country; insofar, moreover, as they and the natives are both unaware of this. For it is a truism so say that everyone tends to believe that the world is just as he sees it and that everyone therefore sees it in the same light.»
>
> Louis Porcher

Setting value on the migrants' culture motivates both foreigners and natives to acquire language skills which make for better communication, but also for better integration. The tendency in many schools with a large number of foreign pupils to reduce the level of attainment required is to be disparaged. It is a paternalistic, inacceptable solution. Mastery of the oral and written language is essential for participation in social life and for access to the levers of power. We must acquire the teaching methods and the staff which will make this dual mastery accessible to a maximum of pupils from native or foreign working-class backgrounds.

Courses in languages and cultures of origin

The existence of courses in languages and cultures of origin might give the impression that the intercultural approach was being pursued. When such courses are given outside normal school hours (1), they constitute an extra burden on pupils, and are sometimes even a hindrance to their development. But the fact that a course is given in normal class time does not necessarily mean that it is truly integrated. It is often only put side by side with other activities and would be better described as «inserted». Such courses sometimes even lead to segregational practices. On the other hand, when teachers of the language of origin are associated with the educational team in a joint project, one can properly speak of integration.

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(1) The terms «parallel» (Belgium) and «extra-curricula» (Commission of the European Communities) are sometimes used.

Where the content of these courses is concerned, the directive stipulates the promotion of the mother tongue and the culture of the country of origin. This can cause problems for children who do not belong to the majority culture of their country. Cultural unification can therefore be artificially constructed abroad by the country of origin: that is a policy of assimilation. The host countries themselves practice a policy of more or less rapid assimilation. Economic interests are involved: for some countries the remittances of emigrants constitute the principal source of foreign currency.

When the purpose of the courses is to strengthen the links with the country of origin, is it compatible with the aim of an intercultural education? This objective is only symbolic and has no intrinsic value. The object is to create a balanced personality, not to cling to one's origins. The position varies with the age of the children at the time of arrival in the host countries. What is the culture of a Portuguese person born in Paris? Do not a person's roots lie more in the neighbourhood than in the distant origins of parents, who themselves change as some characteristics are strengthened and others diluted. Countries of origin and host countries must negotiate their agreements. Their interests mean nothing to the teacher, for whom only the interests of the children count, whatever their origins.

In Belgium, the Italian and Spanish authorities have changed their policy. Originally the teaching of the language was intended to enable people to reintegrate at the equivalent academic level, in the country of origin. The objective now is rather to help the children do well in the local school system and consequently obtain a sound vocational training. Which does not mean that the linguistic objective is overlooked. In many countries there are active local associations of migrants anxious that teachers of the language and culture of origin should be recruited from among the migrants. For example, three Spanish teachers with Belgian degrees, recruited and paid by the Belgian authorities, have received supplementary training in Spain, at the expense of the Spanish authorities.

So what is to be done, from the intercultural point of view, with teachers appointed in accordance with the Directive?

It is true that human rights inspire more words than deeds. We could however introduce more experiments in which foreign and native teachers work together.

Among existing experiments, we must of course progress beyond the «folklore» type, but such experiments are nonetheless interesting. The importance of tales, songs, various literary texts should be borne in mind. Puppet characters have fostered cultural mixes and enhanced certain cultures. We have seen several nationalities contributing, with teachers of different subjects, in the staging of a school play. We could also mention interesting results in history and geography as well as work on festivals, which have produced in all parties an awareness of prejudices, attitudes and behaviour patterns related to the culture.

The best results are obtained when teachers and pupils belonging to different cultures draw up their project together and carry it out together; a fortiori when the joint product is put to other groups.

What characterises man's development, according to E Morin (Pour sortir du XXe siècle), is the transition from survival ethics to planetary, humanistic ethics, which he calls the anthropoetic approach. To reach this stage all kinds of boundaries must be crossed (national, regional, religious etc) and men must be regarded as men, whatever group they belong to.

Points for discussion

- We have spoken of Spanish teachers from a migrant background, recruited in Belgium, paid by the Belgian Government and retrained in Spain. So these are people who immigrated long ago. Is not the teaching of all languages of origin destined eventually to be taken in charge by the host country?

- Joint activities temporarily highlight another culture but do not necessarily yield results at the cognitive level. How can we produce transcultural tools?

- Bringing all the problems together, J Gaillard puts the questions which will guide the subsequent work of the course.

- How to sort out what is a matter of humanism and what calls for more rationalised educational action?

- Intercultural education is a matrix of connections. What then are the areas of possible connections in the different school subjects? Can the curriculum serve as an alibi?

- How can cultural practices be objectivised? What will be the preparatory tools?

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Michel Field: Interculturality and the logic of learning

Introductory thoughts

We could start our investigation by stating a difficulty, not to say an anxiety: «intercultural» concern (CEFISEM, ZEP (1), educational work with gypsy children etc) has been a powerful driving force in promoting a series of teaching practices, often differing, but having the common effect of relativising the division of the school curriculum to achieve a more «global» education - or, when the apparently opposite choice was of education by objectives, it ultimately came to the same thing: through its structural and instrumental approach, education by objectives also makes subject content subordinate to the construction of learning models. The question then arises

(1) Zone d'enseignement prioritaire (Priority Education Area)

in all its stark simplicity: can we say that this concern and the practices which go with it still have their place - and if so, what place? - at the present time when the official instructions are so vigorously restoring the divided curriculum in elementary schools and have chosen to focus almost exclusively on subject-matter.

No doubt we should not let ourselves be over-impressed by the alteration, now ritualised in the French school system, of instructions «on content» following instructions «on methods» nor be taken in by the «self-consciousness» of these official texts convinced that they are on each occasion carrying out a revolution and/or restoration, always urgent, long awaited and necessary. Let us say, with a smile, that in this field too the question of the «alteration» necessarily gives way to that of the «cohabitation» of these two principles in actual classroom practice. But the question remains: how can we master them together? Does or does not the «intercultural» concern give rise to specific problems in this matter?

Cultural/intercultural, disciplinary/interdisciplinary, these two pairs of concepts present themselves to us in a chiastic structure, in that the «intercultural» concept necessarily leads us to the question of the identity of a culture while the disciplinary, which presupposes its identity, leads to the question of the interdisciplinary.

Much therefore will turn on the conceptual status of the inter, which carries with it all the contradictory rationality of its limitation. This will be better understood if we look at the curious history of the word interest. Etymologically, interest is «inter-esse»: what is between, what is interposed. But this «between» is ambiguous: it unites and/or separates, like a frontier, like all boundaries which separate what they unite and unite what they separate.

Interest is to begin with injury or damage - cf the mediaeval sense of «interest» as «to harm». It needed an extraordinary deployment of sophistry in the law and the legal codes to produce, by patient historico-semantic labours, a reversal of the terms and the establishment of the meaning of interest as indemnification.

Thus, by way of «private» interest, the private person, that is to say a person without the means of existence, barred from public life and thus suffering an injury (as, in Rome, those plebians who were deprived of state property, ager publicus, and of their political rights were called privati, despoiled) must, if he borrows money, pay interest to the third-party lender, in compensation for the harm which he causes him - by depriving him of the sum lent!

This example, touched on all too briefly, seems to me to reveal the implications and ambiguities of inter: between no doubt, mediation assuredly, though without the possibility of deciding a priori if it is a passage or an obstacle, a bridge or a barrier. We shall return later, in the light of this initial suspicion, to the false simplicity of the «intercultural» theme.

At the same time, this example at once brings us to the essential point: there is no identity which is not the product of a definition, a determination, a demarcation. Now, to de-fine, to de-marcate is to make a contradictory gesture: I de-fine an identity but, in so doing, I define, by the same token, a «non-identity» or a difference. To put it another way: to determine an identity is in effect to construct a contradictory device in which we produce, together, an identity, a non-identity and a boundary which both separates and unites them.

It might be .. «interesting» (!) to ask ourselves why logico-mathematical rationality has, since Aristotle, claimed to be a rationality of identity, of a non-contradiction and of the third-person-outsider, thus identifying «reason» as what is simply the end of a process, the unilateralisation of a contradictory complex (1), and whether this rationality is the best way we have of understanding what a learning process is.

Again, in other words: wherever an identity is proclaimed (cultural or educational, but also sexual, national etc), it should only be regarded as a terminal (and always unilateral) aspect of the contradictory process which determines it.

Pointers to a logic of learning

These remarks are of importance, if it is true that the term «learning» also reflects the contradiction of the dual movement of ap-prehension, of grasping (cf the German der Begriff, the concept, which returns to the original meaning of grasping, greifen). Learning is first a process which brings into play a temporality and a finality. This process is, in the proper sense of the word, infinite, even if it is determined in relation to definite structures: thus, to take a well-known example, the question of learning to read arises well before it is explicity taken up in the school and is pursued in(de)finitely in the renewed practice of reading by the adult.

You will forgive me for reminding you of this obvious fact, but it has crucial epistemological implications: strictly speaking we cannot assign a beginning to learning - or rather, this beginning is to be understood in the most speculative sense of «de-parture», just as its termination is to be understood as an end, in the sense of purpose rather than conclusion. From this point on, the question is that of the choice of learning models and their strictest possible formulation: that is to say, first and foremost the optimal clarification of all the assumptions made by this or that model (2).

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(1) Cf Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik, Die Subjektive Logik, 1 and 2.

(2) On the theory of assumption cf Oswald Ducrot, in particular Dire ou ne pas dire (Hermann, Paris 1972) and Le Dire et le Dit (Minuit, Paris 1984).

Thus to pursue the example of reading, the jungle of methods, the diversity of textbooks and the quarrels which regularly arouse pedagogical passions can be reduced, it seems to me, to two poles, two standard models each of which derives its coherence from a different choice of rationality:

(a) an analytical model, whose assumptions show a strictly Cartesien influence: a complex whole is composed of simple parts, which must first be identified, isolated so that they can be progressively linked together «in accordance with the order of the reasons» (1). Correlative: the whole accords strictly with the sum of its parts; the operational rules, connections, relations etc remain external and not reducible to these «simple» parts.

It may be said in passing that the latest official instructions give exclusive (though implicit) preference to such a theoretical model.

(b) a «dialectical» model, for which the theoretical foundation is to be found in Bachelard's work, in particular in his critique of the epistemologies of simplicity (2), and, even more, in the work of Canguilhem (3). Against Bachelard's «mechanistic» logic Canguilhem puts forward a logic inspired by that of the living being: critique of the notion of «simple» - the simple being only the complex as it is assumed; re-evaluation of the idea of «beginning» which contains the whole of the process finalised by virtue, here too, of the assumed etc. Here the whole is not the equivalent of the sum of its parts: each «part» is determined by the logic of the totality, as each «means» is by the global aim of the process. Finally, and above all, the relation, the interaction (4), the correction essentially determine the place and function of the parts, which do not pre-exist as entities

From one point of view, you find in the contrast between these models what the Greeks had already carefully distinguished when they differentiated «poiesis» (and its technological model) and «praxis» (and its bio-logical model) (5).

We can try to recapitulate the various determinations of this second model in a diagram in which the logic of learning is perceived as an authentic process of knowledge. We shall recognise in it pointers from Piagetian genetic psychology and from the works of Bruner (6). (Cf. diagram on p.18).

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(1) Cf Descartes, Rules for the Direction of the Mind and Principles of Philosophy (published Pléiade).

(2) G Bachelard, Le Nouvel Esprit Scientifique (PUF, Paris, 1934) in particular Chapter VI, «L'épistémologie non-cartésienne».

(3) G Canguilhem, «La Connaissance de la Vie» (Vrin, Paris, 1975) in particular «Machine et Organisme» and »Le Vivant et son Milieu».

(4) Cf G Bateson, «La Nature et la Pensée» (Seuil, Paris, 1984).

(5) Cf J P Vernant, Mythe et Pensée chez les Grecs (Maspero, Paris, 1971, Volume II).

(6) Cf in particular J S Bruner, Savoir faire, savoir dire (PUF, Paris, 1983).

Using this diagram, we could «distribute» the various possible choices of educational practices (and not techniques) by showing how each choice follows a specific path, organises a particular circuit, in this set of relations and determinations. The diagram helps to throw light on this or that aporia: thus, to take only one example, while the theories of «discovery» have convincingly explained the need to construct a learning situation centred on the child, his life, his environment etc (an inductive approach proceeding from the particular to the universal), has it not underestimated the difficulty of the transition from this type of situation «centred» on the subject to a situation of (conceptual or instrumental) mastery, in which what counts is precisely the capacity of the subject for abstraction, repetition, «decontextualisation» - ultimately in contradiction to the determinations of the initial situation? And it is not this «chink in their theoretical armour» which has prevented its best theoreticians from finding the appropriate reply to certain aberrations in the present ministerial arguments?

Finally, we could, still on the basis of this recapitulative diagram, interconnect, with the same end in view:

- instrumental methodologies, inasmuch as they establish a progression, that is to say display the reason for the relation between a content structure and an educational model, and

- discovery activities, inasmuch as they offer a model of global learning, because based on induction.

It is this interconnection which will help us to distinguish - and this will be essential to what follows - between the practice of thematic interdisciplinarity (theme, project etc; induction; concentric waves of interest and motivation etc) and the practice of structural interdisciplinarity which, in its case, would aim at the clarification of common, essentially «transdisciplinary», operational structures, which we shall here call cognitive structures.

A few examples may be given of these cognitive structures:

a. Class division: the object is to be able to recognise as «similar» or «equivalent» two objects taken from a set, in accordance with a given criterion. This concept, which corresponds to the concept of equivalence relation in mathematics, introduces the double criterion of discrimination and «similarity». We see it working in the nursery school or in the CP (1) in exercises in recognising colours, shapes, sounds, rhythms etc or in the study of whole numbers, cardinal numbers etc.

Then, in the following classes, in everything relating to the classification of functions of structural forms (biological functions, grammatical forms, connectors in the logic of propositions etc).

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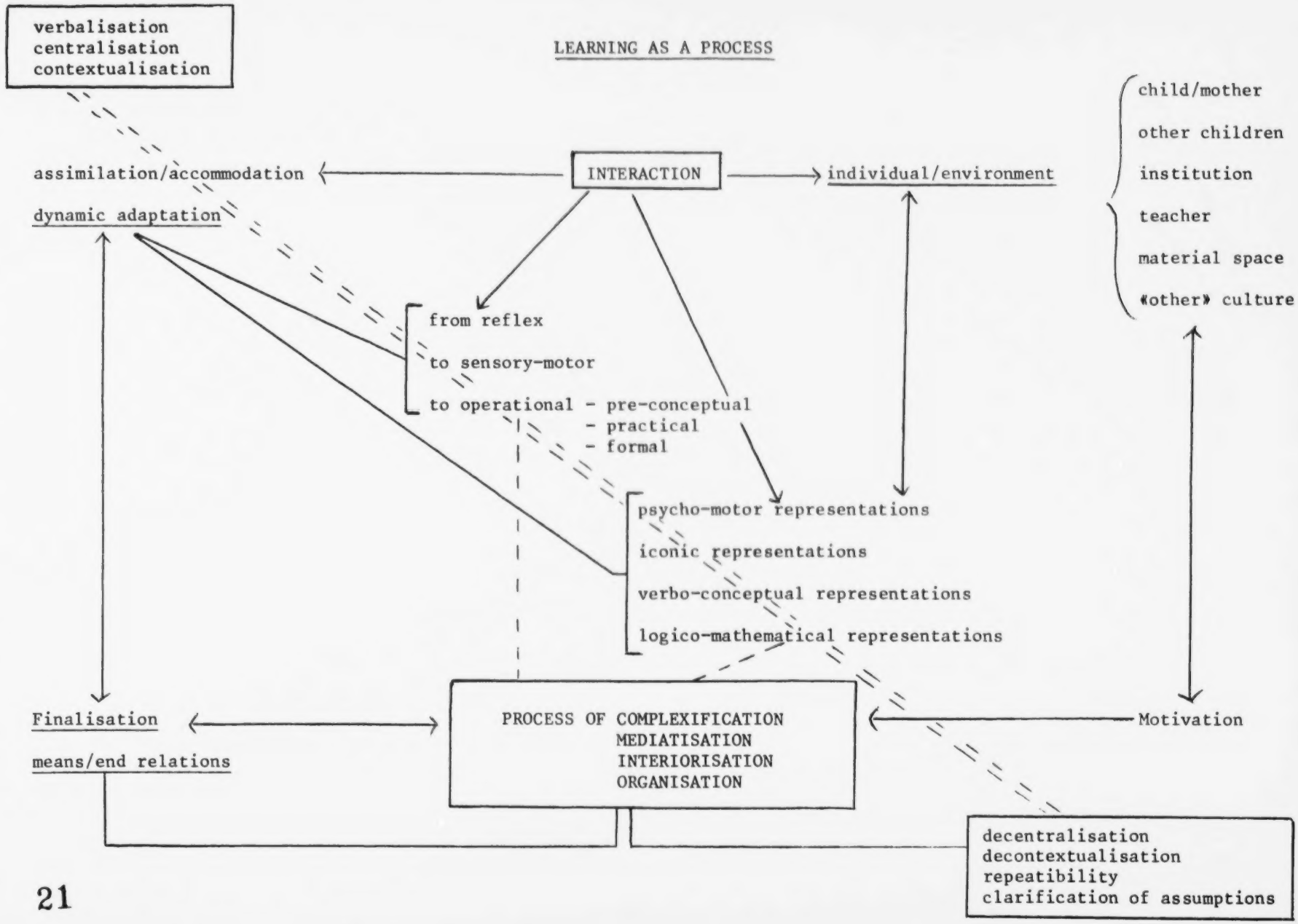
(1) cours préparatoire


verbalisation
centralisation
contextualisation
LEARNING AS A PROCESS
child/mother
other children
institution
teacher
material space
«other» culture
assimilation/accommodation
INTERACTION
individual/environment
dynamic adaptation
from reflex
to sensory-motor
to operational - pre-conceptual
- practical
- formal
psycho-motor representations
iconic representations
verbo-conceptual representations
logico-mathematical representations
Finalisation
means/end relations
PROCESS OF COMPLEXIFICATION
MEDIATISATION
INTERIORISATION
ORGANISATION
Motivation
decentralisation
decontextualisation
repeatibility
clarification of assumptions

b. Order: This is a matter of comparing objects or classes of objects two by two, in accordance with a criterion of arrangement (relation of order, concept of cycle). This occurs with coding in writing and with decoding in reading, but also in the comparision of numbers or work on various mathematical bases. Later these structures, linked to graphic representations, will reappear in questions of map scale, tree classification, cycles or networks.

c. Topological structures: concepts acquired in the study of certain order structures, concerning separation and proximity (eg administrative maps; reference points: between, in front, behind etc).

d. Group structures: (a group is a set governed by a law of internal, associative composition; there is a neutral element and all elements admit a symmetry). These are probably strongest operationally, but can only with difficulty be made explicit in the primary school (in the CM (1): composition of itineraries, cross-road games, initiation to the structure of the game of draughts etc).

Though it is not possible, within the limits of this paper to give a fuller analysis of these structures, these pointers would seem sufficient for us to return now to the question with which we are concerned, interculturality and the logic of learning, by reflecting further on the factors and problems set out above.

What definition of culture?

If the problem of teaching is initially one of the relation between a child and a «culture», within the as yet undetermined meaning of the term, we have to isolate two parameters in order to try to define the meaning more closely, bearing in mind the excellent, highly speculative distinction made in German between Kultur in the sense of «cultural system» or culture as context, and Bildung, in the sense of «training», «education», or culture as a process of appropriation.

Culture as a certain state of systems of representation and conceptualisation bound up with technological mastery.

In this aspect of the definition, the essential parameter relates to the operational mastery of logical connectors, which presupposes the updating of common operational structures, like those referred to in the previous paragraph.

But here an initial problem arises which will dog our study, perhaps because it remains the blind spot of many studies on interculturalism: what is the relationship between this operational mastery and mastery of the language? Does the one fuse into the other? Is the latter a necessary - or sufficient-condition of the latter?

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(1) cours moyen

We shall return to this point - but we can say here and now that two, very different, historical examples can help us:

a. the scholastic ideology of French colonialism in black Africa was based on a belief in the simplicity of this relationship: since the French language appeared to be both a powerful technological tool and a structured system of representation and conceptualisation, it had to be the environment for all learning and became a system which conditioned all operative learning.

We may ask ourselves whether this ideology did not foster a confusion (or did not rest on a confusion) between the historicity of this mastery and the mastery itself, ie its expression in the language and its logical, conceptual, strictly operative aspect.

b. the cultural and historical assumption would then be easy to grasp: we would discover in the strength of western culture and its own «self-awareness» what was the specific character of the «Greek miracle», the emergence of a logos which was both language and reason, proportion and mastery of the relation - in other words a theory of language as a system of communication and as a system of representation, of conceptualisation, of logico-mathematical mastery (cf the work of Gernet and Vernant on the geometrisation of the political arena and on the cosmogony of Anaximander, posing the question of the «apeiron» at the most mythical and epistemological level, formulated (Plato) then systematised (Aristotle) in a system of generalised equivalence (cf Organon) (1).

Culture as a more or less systematised set of inculcative procedures.

In this second aspect of the definition, the essential parameter is interaction (2). What is fundamental is that the inter-actional state by which an individual accedes to this culture is different from, and is not reducible to, the state of culture in the sense defined above. The question which then arises is how children acquire the operational means. The initial procedures, interactive, non-verbal, instrumental, iconic etc (3) are crucial here.

In other words, the essential thing is to produce situations involving the exchange and creation of communicative and representational processes. Question: is it not therefore pointless to make the learning of a language, however «perfected», the exclusive objective, if that objective is achieved to the detriment of the process of interaction, which is then short-circuited or relativised?

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(1) L Gernet, Anthropology of Ancient Greece (Maspero, Paris, 1968) and J P Vernant, op.cit. Volume 1.

(2) Read on this point the excellent article by A Biancheri in Communautés éducatives, Nos.50-51.

(3) J S Bruner, op.cit., in particular chapters 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10.

Two functions of language must then be carefully distinguished:

a. identificatory and communicative function (affective etc) where the relation to a certain community is involved;

b. function of the subsumption of world events under the categories and rules of the language (while taking care not to forget that, in teaching practice, for example, the operative language is constantly accompanied by metalanguage: «$\Longrightarrow$» accompanied by «therefore» « $\equiv$ » by «equal» etc with a tendency to confuse the two (1).

Here too, it is interesting to reflect on some «historic moments» when the relation between the two levels was a determining factor:

a. in colonialist ideology, as we have seen, it is believed that the second function is contained in the first: having a «developed» language (ie the language of the colonial power) is the condition for operative mastery. It may be asked whether the educational assumption of the French school establishment (legacy of the Enlightenment, of 19th century positivism etc) does not partake of this belief ... and in much «intercultural» theorising! What is at issue here is the certainty that the logico-mathematical and symbolic objectives are the same as the mastery of the language.

b. another, quite different example: in the extraordinary transition from Latin to French (indeed, to Gascon!) made by Descartes, what is assumed is the primacy of the operative procedure over its vehicular language, as if mastery of the operative procedures («order of reasons») was ultimately indifferent to its language of expression - in other words, as if this mastery concerned the «deep structure» of the language, allowing, once grasped, for all sorts of transfers on the «surface structures» inherent in a certain type of verbalisation - which is empirically confirmed by many teachers of «specific» classes: the relative mastery of the mother tongue is more often a help than a hindrance to operative learning - indeed to the learning of «another» language, like French.

c. lastly, we may ponder a final historical example, especially relevant to questions of instrumentality: the thoughts of Diderot and the Encyclopaedists on the plate (picture) as a model of rationality which could break with a certain linearity of natural language.

The two levels of the «intercultural»

At this point we may ask whether the «intercultural» does not operate at two levels, not to be confused or identified, involving:

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(1) Cf G Frèce, Ecrits logiques et philosophiques (Seuil, Paris, 1971) and O Ducrot, op.cit. on the production of meaning, cf G Deleuze, Logique du sens (Minuit, Paris, 1969).

The manner of acculturation

Take the case of an original language in a given culture C. The question is whether, and to what extent, culture C takes over the formal processes of acquisition (verbalisation, technological mastery etc) and the cognitive structures C'.

If all cultures established the equivalence $C \equiv C'$, the question of the «transcultural» could easily be reduced to the part played by the cognitive process in learning.

But the problem of cultural diversity stems from the differences in the degree to which, in the language, the logical and operational procedures are made explicit and formalised, differences which determine specific modes of initiation and socialisation. Thus, among the Baoules of the Ivory Coast, weavers superpose colours (three times red, twice blue etc). The implicit structure of this activity requires the technologico-operational knowledge of algorithms of the smallest common multiple, but it is not made explicit or formalised - and the disciples grasp this structure as a «secret» know-how with transmission rites etc. Hence the obviously false impression that the Baoule language is «incapable» of this rationalisation, whereas it has neither the cognitive nor the cultural aim of making it explicit.

This is the crux of the matter: in all cultures there are extremely sophisticated technologies (weaving, irrigation, cooking, pottery, music etc) based on complex operational structures, but whose «logos» does not have the function of verbalisation and explicitation. Hence, moreover, the importance of the «secret» or the mimetic rules of transmission; we know the important part these played in the west (trade guilds etc), particularly in the development of technological know-how.

The relation verbalisation procedures/formalisation and manipulation procedures

What has been said above gives us a better understanding of this relationship, which is crucial. It might even be said - provocatively - that the vehicular language which accompanies these operational procedures is of little importance!

Take an example: a ZEP, newly arrived immigrant children, an Arab instructor and, in the CP, a Dienès-type method for teaching ensemblist grammar.

Questions:

- Is not a French teacher concerned essentially with working out situations in which French is the language accompanying operational procedures - far more decisive than the «series of exercises in French» as such - since it is as the operational and cognitive metalanguage of these skills that the language provides its deep-rooted structures, not only its surface structures?

- Is not an Arab instructor concerned essentially with the cultural identification of children with a tradition, history and language which are, more often than not, quite «strange» to them (how often is the «cultural identity» artificially created and classical Arabic a really foreign language?) and with the fact of coming to the CP, in the classroom at the moment when the verbalisation of operational activities is taking shape, so that the language of origin is introduced both with a view to learning or improving knowledge of the mother tongue and as a language with an operational function? - knowing that on this basis the transfer from one language to another will occur more easily.

And, again provocatively, we ask this question: in what way is this decisive educational choice specific to immigrant children? Do not the problems raised here arise in identical terms, in regard to the structure of learning, for all school children?

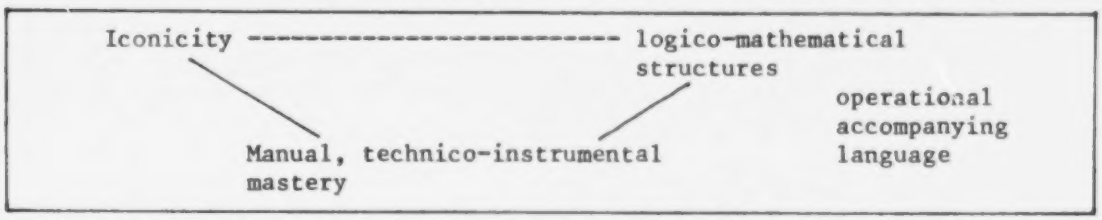
Questions with which (not) to conclude

We may at this point put a series of questions to guide our thinking on these problems:

What is the (problematic) identification of the cognitive and the linguistic, which might conceivably derive from the strength of the linguistic models which have, more often metaphorically than structurally, presented themselves as reference «paradigms» both in the social «sciences» and in educational models?

Although perceptual education also depends on a real cultural diversity, is it possible to advance the hypothesis that diagrams, formulation by schemas or graphs, are perhaps a priori more «transcultural», ie universal, than strict logical linearity?

Should we therefore prefer, as an operational model, the triangle



rather than concentrate exclusively on the learning of French as a condition sine qua non of all other learning.

Is not the fundamental theoretical purpose of these questions to effect, in educational practice as a whole, the dissociation of the problem of the operational language, having as referant universal structures - exclusive agent for access to the cognitive, from the problem of the expressive language? In other words, we should cease to confuse :

- «specific» and «culturally determined» objectives related to the expressivity level;

- and «transcultural» and «universal» objectives, related to the level of representation and operational knowledge.

Whereby we may perhaps perceive that, in the complex process of acculturation, all children are in the position of immigrants in relation to a culture which is not yet theirs.

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Jean-Claude Morice: The Intercultural Concept and Art Education

The intercultural concept and acculturation

Acculturation: signifies, in social psychology, the learning process through which a child acquires the culture of the milieu to which he belongs.

(1 Culture: all the knowledge which determines (partly or wholly) our modes of thinking of reality)

Acculturation: signifies, in anthropology, the phenomena of contacts and interpenetration between different civilisations.

(Civilisation ⟶ 2 culture: what is common to people in a society).

By these two definitions, acculturation, in our society, is directly related to politics, economics, psychology, religion, teaching, education etc.

and to such pairs as:

majority	minority
demand	constraint
territory	host country
integration	resistance
nationalism	internationalism
segregation	cross-breeding
responsibility	right etc

Not forgetting the dual interconnection between education (policy) and acculturation on the one hand, between acculturation as the process of learning and acculturation as interpenetration between different civilisations, on the other hand; let us first take acculturation as «learning process» and ask the following question:

Is it not possible for the teacher to begin by examining these problems of learning in children? Because, whoever the «minority» child he has before him, must he not ensure that this child «specialises» in our society (and does so even in the plastic arts)?

Children (drawing on the work of Levi-Strauss: «Les structures élémentaires de la Parenté» Chapter VII: L'illusion archaique).

The idea of a particular thought structure in children (whatever their social origins) as distinct from that of adults does not stand up against Levi-Strauss's analysis.

However, a child is not an adult (so that we must not imply that a civilised child thinks like the primitive adult). The thinking of an adult and the thinking of a child differ in extent rather than in structure. It is by «specialising» that the «polymorphous» thought of the child can expand. We may add this quotation by Levi-Strauss from Basov: «If his environment does not place the child in conditions requiring the formation of more elaborate structures, the lowest may well remain the only ones he is capable of producing», and so understand the obligation of this work of acculturation (of specialisation), including the fine arts;

- favoured area for the exercise of figurative thought (cf work of Francastel).

- favoured area of introducing the operations necessary to the exercise of skill in reading iconic productions, such as syntaxic and referential operations and operations identifying constraints (cf Bresson's work).

- favoured area for encouraging the categorial, differential attitudes of children to images (cf Bresson).

- favoured area for the construction (in part by imitation, cf Wallon's work) of skills in the production of figures and images.

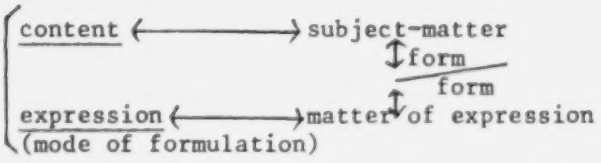
Plastic arts

Having hastily settled the problem of the definition of the plastic arts (they are not literature or music), we see that the study of this sector of artistic production strengthens the relation between the child, acculturation (learning process, specialisation) and the plastic arts (activities of a cognitive nature).

The views of Levi-Strauss and Francastel come together in calling the plastic art approach a «venture in knowledge».

Semiology (cf Umberto Eco's work) confirms this proposition. Working on the process of constructing meaning in a production which brings the «semiotic function» into play

Production bringing the semiotic function into play



demonstrates the necessity for learning processes in the formulation and identification of different figures.

The figures concerned are:

The figure-image sign
sememe (need of an utterance)

The figure-structure (organisation of the above)

The figure-formal element (generator of the first)

The rhetorical figure (which results from the application of the other three).

Sociology (cf Bourdieu's work) strengthens this last point by showing the close relation between the cultural field and the figurative field.

Society - School

Every human group, every society, can understand itself, among other ways, from practices (like those of the plastic arts) in which the relation between REAL/IMAGINARY/LANGUAGE(S) is brought into play (cf Semio. The plastic arts considered as a language).

By examining these practices (starting in the elementary school) we can produce more accurate representations and knowledge, insofar as these practices can necessarily only be understood through a dynamic of acculturation (interpretation of civilisations this time) and not in a restricted national arena and not through the definition of a culture without history (eg the question of representation of space).

It would appear that all the above covers a sector of teaching in schools, that of the plastic arts.

Thus teaching of the plastic arts in the elementary school (introduced in France in the middle of the 19th century as «drawing lessons») makes it possible to deal with, necessarily deals with, should always have dealt with, the problem of acculturation (in these two meanings).

Teaching of the plastic arts at the elementary school covers, if we refer to the latest official texts, the technical, cultural and expression (manner of formulation) sectors.

(A comparison can be made between the identification by Levi-Strauss of three contingencies taken into account in artistic production: material, recipient, model. By recognising the historicity of these contingencies and questioning them constantly, we are able to make the distinction between art and crafts).

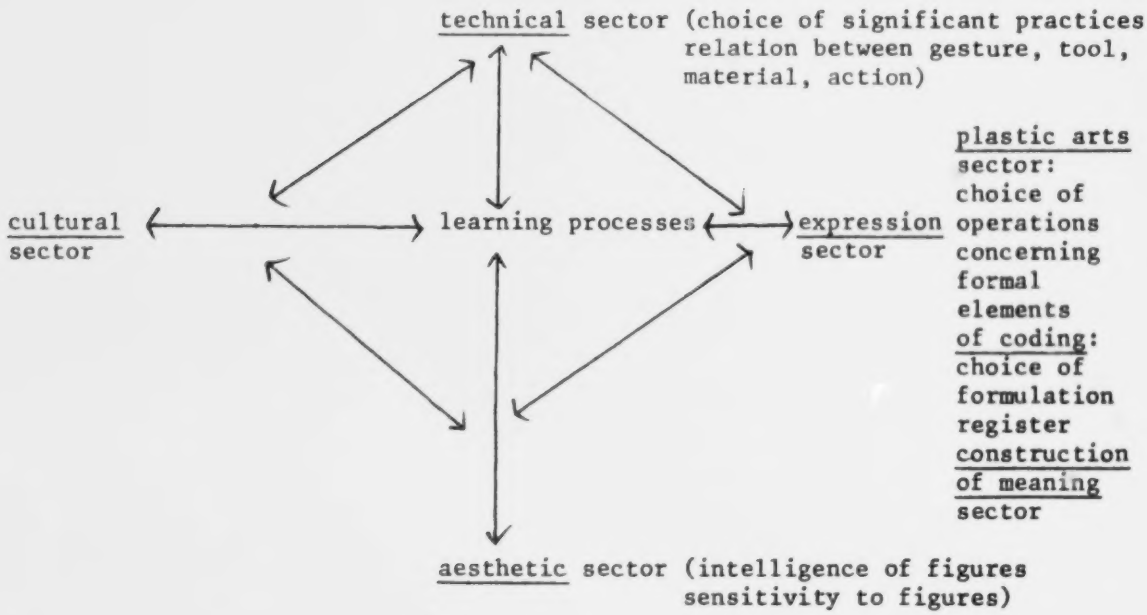
Taking this teaching into account, the schoolmaster is the intermediary between the child and the artistic approach. The child «specialises» through figure production situations. He engages in learning of a technical, cultural and expressive nature.

Directed work.

Divided into four groups, the course members were asked to classify documents (exhibition posters, postcards, invitation cards to art galleries), identifying similarities and differences.

Summary of directed work and discussion.

The group's work elucidated the learning sectors and their constant interrelations.


technical sector (choice of significant practices relation between gesture, tool, material, action)
cultural sector
learning processes
expression sector
plastic arts sector: choice of operations concerning formal elements of coding: choice of formulation register construction of meaning sector
aesthetic sector (intelligence of figures sensitivity to figures)

It confirmed the fact that the teaching of the plastic arts in elementary schools necessarily treats the problem of acculturation in both its senses.

This acculturation offers the child a multitude of choices and productions. In this field, multiplying the choices leads to the progressive discovery that in representing space, all societies encounter the same problems, to which only a few solutions have been found: it is always a matter of projective representations, which lead to a particular type of projection (conic isometric perspective, axonometric for our society).

In sum, the intercultural approach, in the plastic arts, would appear to consist, inter alia, in bringing the child into contact with numerous models, among which he will choose his own. By working on these models, on the one hand, and by producing himself, on the other hand, he will come to understand that although the forms vary from one culture to another, space is always the subject treated.

Is the intercultural approach a pretext for acquiring flexible patterns of behaviour?

It may indeed be a pretext for doing things which are not being done, if we consider that at present only 15% of teachers teach children this subject. The intercultural approach is an indispensable dimension in learning. This does not mean however that the behaviour of minority children will be changed: we are only concerned here with the process of learning. The relations of the child with history and with aesthetics were not the issue today: the question was only dealt with from the point of view of production.

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Daniel Coste: Culture and language learning

The intercultural concept will not be broached directly. We shall first study what has changed language teaching and earlier models of language, culture and civilisation, in particular the concept of communicative skill.

We shall then show how the concepts of learning have developed from a behaviourist model (in connection with structuralism) to a model marked by the Chomskyian influence.

Finally we shall deal with the concepts of culture and the intercultural.

The concepts of communicative skill and the intercultural approach have as it were «intersected». The former, which first affected language teaching, was subsequently incorporated into the teaching of migrants' children. The latter, on the contrary, stemmed from the problems of integrating foreign children and, as it were, underwent «osmosis» with the teaching of foreign languages.

The concept of communicative skill

Chomsky contrasted performance and skill, and defined linguistic skill in relation to an ideal subject, in a homogeneous community. Dell Hymes, heir to American cultural anthropology (Sapir, Boas etc), developed the idea; from a linguistic skill it became a communcative skill. It concerns the subject, but in a heterogeneous community and in situations of social interaction. It implies not only linguistic knowledge, but the inward assimilation of the social uses of language (role of situational contexts, language registers etc), and it incorporates other than cognitive factors - such as affective and volitional factors. Whereas for Chomsky linguistic skill is inborn, communicative skill, according to Hymes, is largely created by social learning. Hence it varies from one person to another, which considerably changes the concept of performance. This concept, far from being a kind of wasting (Chomsky), is interactive and is constructed by adjustments and negotiations through social experience. It brings to the fore social relations, their rites and the role play which they produce. The diversity of situations gives rise to constant adaptation and so to a learning process.

The notion of a communicative skill leads us to the problem of evaluation. In the rituals of social life, the speaker is not content to transmit information; he is constantly having to test the relevance of his language choices, and so to evaluate them and evaluate those of other speakers.

Although Hymes' concern is not pragmatic linguistics, the types of models which he proposes cross with the theory of speech acts in the analytical philosophy of Austin. The concept of the act appears in the work of Hymes as a unit within speech events, which are themselves part of a situation. Austin, on the contrary, examines the conditions of the truth of utterances.

The concept of communicative skill in language teaching

We have examined its components and have distinguished, for example, between:

- a linguistic component: grammatical knowledge and practical knowledge

- a discursive component, involving knowledge of the rules of production and interpretation

- a referential component: knowledge of the world enables us to make the above components operative.

The scenarios of social life which have been inwardly assimilated organise the cognitive elements in such a way that interpretations and influences are possible in daily intercourse. Knowledge therefore acquires a cultural imprint.

- an interactive component, which is related to the conduct of intercourse.

Some educational tools

From this point of view, a «Niveau seuil» (1), as worked out within the Council of Europe's «Modern Languages» project, is an instrument which should help to define ways of establishing learning objectives.

It is postulated that the purpose of learning a foreign language - particularly for adults - is to acquire a minimum of communicative skill, which is not limited to linguistic knowledge, but entails capacity for action. To describe such functional tools, analysis categories like those of communication situations, speech acts, concepts are brought into play together with those of status and role to characterise speakers in interaction. We then inquire how these acts, these concepts, these interactive relations will be expressed linguistically.

Part of the description of these objectives is, as it were, «transversal» to different languages: for example, the ability, in a given language, to congratulate someone or to complain of bad service. It is therefore, in the initial stage, independent of any particular natural language. But, in a second stage, we shall specify the modes of expression to be adopted, depending on the objective, in the language concerned. The aim is pragmatic. The idea of describing the content of learning in terms of speech acts has advanced the learning of natural languages.

Concurrently with the «Niveau Seuil», and for the teaching of literacy, an educational dossier was produced on «La Recherche d'un emploi» (Looking for a job).

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(1) Niveau Seuil: a threshold level for French

This dossier was produced in CREDIF, on the basis of pragmatic and functional hypotheses: how to get learners to use the language effectively in a situation such as looking for a job?

A situation of this kind must be analysed so as to bring out the knowledge of a linguistic, textual, referential nature which it calls for and the dispositions to action which it implies.

It can give rise to activities such as: reading or inserting an advertisement, telephoning to an advertiser, writing a letter submitting a curriculum vitae, having an interview at an employment agency, and so on. Each of these language events presupposes a minimum of linguistic knowledge, but also referential knowledge.

The use of an educational tool brings into play the components of communicative skill. It raises questions about what techniques and strategies to employ. All these moves must be made explicit and objectivised. Is not the deviser of such a dossier the victim of his own models? Since the strategies for solving problems always bear a cultural imprint, the educational dossier runs the risk of responding to situations which are quite improbable for the worker concerned.

In teaching children, work done jointly with the ELCOs would enable us to take into consideration the cultural practices of the foreigners concerned. The explicitation approach must be made by both partners.

- Project for new tools: multi-media and multi-level video material

This material should help us to take a comparative view of different cultural practices. Its use would not be of the instrumental and functional type.

It will be a series of short video modules produced in the XIIIth arrondissement of Paris, presenting concise portraits of people interviewed in their homes, talking about their home surroundings and their neighbourhood. The outline portraits could be supplemented by indicators taken from the picture or the discourse: one can imagine the layout of the apartment, place the witnesses socially, reconstitute their possible history. They will bring out the diversity of cultural positions and social trajectories; the diversity, too, of neighbourhood itineraries and of possible perceptions of them. It is intended that these documents should feature more or less recently settled foreigners.

So this is not a functional preparation for the use of French people, but an intercultural appraisal based on the objectivisation of practices.

What is involved is the use of the concept of communicative skill in teaching. We must however be on our guard against certain wayward tendencies.

- Its cultural component has sometimes been neutralised in favour of transversality, in educational tools. It should be seen in relation to Bourdieu's concept of «habitus».

- Communicative skill, regarded as oral, has sometimes been contrasted with linguistic skill, regarded as written. It goes without saying that communicative skill involves both the oral and the written.

The concept of repertoire

Are there distinct communicative skills, in the mother tongue and in a foreign language? Or is there a single communicative skill with mother tongue and foreign language components?

The concept of repertoire comes from socio-linguistics, whether macro-sociolinguistics (that is to say concerned with cultural communities) or micro-sociolinguistics (that is to say centred on the individual).

- macro-sociolinguistics. The work of Fishmann, among others, deals with the relation between social sectors (school, religion etc) and language choices. Depending on sector, we find varieties of speech which, in a given language, are so many distinct dialects, more or less self-contained, when not actually different languages.

- micro-sociolinguistics: the individual more or less masters the varieties peculiar to different sectors in a given community. Hence the idea of a repertoire, at both «macro» and «micro» levels. The individual may have a more or less extensive repertoire within a community.

This concept is connected with that of communicative skill, but leads us to question the concept of linguistic skill and even the relevance of the concept of language. For the individual masters ever differing varieties rather than possessing a central linguistic skill. This leads us to relativist probings. Studies of this subject demonstrate, inter alia, the not always conscious character of the changes in varieties. The repertoires correspond to areas of social activity. We thus arrive at complex representation; some varieties are isolated, others overlap, some become fossilised, others evolve with social experience. It is as if some varieties, bound up with the family sector, for example, come to a standstill, while the subject acquires other varieties.

Bernstein draws conclusions from the above with regard to the subsequent learning capacity of individuals who have only known a single, particularly poor linguistic variety in their family environment.

Moreover, these varieties follow an internal hierarchy: some may be valued and others looked down on. This leads us to ask whether there is not also a cultural repertoire comprising immutable varieties and others which, on the contrary, are fluid, inter-relating and themselves subject to evaluation.

Changing conditions in the learning of a foreign language. The interlanguage concept.

History

- structuralist phase (about 30 years ago)

Language I and language II respectively constitute a structured whole. There is no relation between the component parts of the one and the component parts of the other; in the final analysis, translation is impossible. (cf Georges Mounin, Theoretical Problems of Translation).

In terms of learning, it is a matter of identifying the areas of relative proximity between the two languages. Contrastive analyses compare languages from system to system and, on that basis, a linguistic progression is constructed without regard to the learner. Only the language system is examined, in terms of phonology, syntax etc.

- longitudinal phase, which rehabilitates the process of learning

We rediscover the mechanisms of inference, transfers of learning, the role of error, hasty generalisations and the longitudinal dynamic of learning.

- interlanguage

Learning is not an exact, progressive construction from a language II, but movement through coherent transitional systems serving as provisional languages, which are all successive approximations to the target language.

These transitional systems have been called «interlanguages». The term is ambiguous. They «proceed» towards language II (or L II). But is L2 a system of L2, or a combination of varieties of L2? What governs their development?

The hypothesis is that there exists an innate acquisition mechanism, which is reactivated when we learn a foreign language.

In any learning process, whatever the mother tongue and whatever the foreign language concerned, we observe phenomena of simplification and morphological reduction, as well as phenomena of progressive complexification (the whole process can be compared to the movements observed in pidgnisation and creolisation).

We may moreover ask ourselves, metaphorically, if pidgnisation phenomena do not also occur in the case of contacts between cultures.

The successive language states are not homogeneous. In the transition from one to the other, phenomena of regression, anticipation and fossilisation occur. We ought therefore to reason in terms of micro-systems rather than the transition from one system to another, with developments which may affect one micro-system and not another, acquisition of the language being thought of as a sort of «archipelago».

These interpretative models are not unrelated to the repertoire concept referred to above. In any case our conceptions of learning, like those of language, have become more flexible.

Another ambiguity: progress in acquisition is not reflected in progress in learning as proposed by the textbooks or the methods. In particular, it is claimed, the mechanism of acquisition is not fuelled in the school system by sufficiently plentiful data. The natural milieu is therefore more suitable for observing the working of the acquisition process.

In the process of learning, particularly in the processes of fossilisation or, on the contrary, development, account must be taken of the functionality of the varieties concerned, but also of the important part played by evaluation. For example, when a foreigner keeps to a particular kind of pronunciation or accent, is this due to blocks, to the desire to preserve his image, etc? In a study of stylistic variations giving rise to social evaluation, Labov shows that some groups who have a low opinion of their language practices endeavour to adopt the practices of other groups which they think well of, while other groups, on the contrary, may assert their identity by displaying varieties they know are looked down on.

Concept of culture and language learning

- Structuralists look on cultures as systems which are independent of one another, and seek to define units or «culturemes» within these systems. It is a standardising representation of culture, which leads to the descriptive teaching of civilisation.

- In a second phase, it was considered that there are, in each macro-culture, sub-systems or micro-cultures, some of which are dominant. So that we may ask whether two intercultural elements are not closer to one another than two elements within the same, highly differentiated culture. This theory has given rise, in the educational field, to studies on particular problems.

- In a third phase, the subject is bypassed.

What is meant by «belonging to a culture»? What does it mean for an individual to be in contact, through learning a foreign language, with another culture?

Each individual belongs to many cultures, just as he has a repertoire of speech varieties, which calls into question the notion of global culture. In which case, what is meant by interculturality within an individual? Are some cultural varieties fossilised or, rather, in conflict with one another ... These are matters of guesswork rather than proof.

Thus we proceed from the teaching of civilisation which was of the descriptive type to a stage which is more concerned with the learning process, in particular with the way in which the multi-culturalism that is characteristic of all individuals comes about. From this point of view, the endeavour is made to demonstrate paths, trajectories, boundaries etc.

To illustrate this development, it should be noted that the teaching of civilisation has come successively under different sciences (cf article by Francis Debyzer, in Topiques 6 (1)): sociology, anthropology (daily practices), semiology (significance of practices in semiological terms following on the work of R Barthes).

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(1) Alliance Française. First biennale (1983). Actes Topiques 6

Today, our approach is closer to that, for example, of Georges Perec and the way in which he reconstructs the image of a town little by little from the reference points he has taken and the indications he has found in his investigations. In the educational field too we try to introduce these reference points and to promote a revitalising study of the familiar environment. It is necessary for this purpose to devise educational tools which reflect that familiar environment but which, at the same time, trouble us and oblige us to clarify our own practices.

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Marianne Field: History and the intercultural approach

Bearing in mind the theoretical assumptions concerning modes of learning, how can we put into practical effect in the classroom a method of teaching history in conformity with the official instructions, a method which, at first sight, appears to be very much centred on national history?

We must first specify the objectives and curricula as set out in the official texts.

- the objectives of history teaching:

to understand the present from a knowledge of the past, in order to build the future;

to work on memory, for memory is modern, active and creative;

to educate French citizens in a modern world.

- curricula

In the CP the object is to help the child to structure time, working at his own pace in accordance with his personal background.

In the CE we shall progressively help the child away from self-centredness, by going back in time to parental and family origins, in order to demarcate what one may call «the present time», that is to say the past of which witnesses can still be found. Starting from this recent past, we must identify the broad chronological frames of French history which then raises the problem of the origins of historical time.

In the CM we take up the study of history proper, in seven periods.

. prehistoric times: the decisive acquisitions of man and communities

. the origins of France: Celts, Romans, Germans (trade, wars, unions)

. mediaeval society
feudalism: lords and peasants, town and country, art and culture (role of the Church and religion), monarchy and the foundation of the state (from Philip Augustus and Louis XI)

. changes in the modern world (XVIth-XVIIth centuries)

the great discoveries and the opening up of new worlds

religious problems (Reformation - wars of religion)

the kings of France and the development of their powers

intellectual and artistic movements

developments in science and technology

. revolutionary France and Napoleonic Europe

. France in the XIXth century (1815-1914)

. France in the XXth century.

The chapter headings of the curriculum are significant and these curricula are essential reading for schoolmasters, of course, but also for the ELCOs (1). It is interesting to note that the first period considered is no longer entitled, as in Lavisse's 1923 textbook «The origins of time: our ancestors the Gauls», but that the birth of France is seen as resulting from the clash of civilisations.

Similarly, the study of mediaeval society is not reduced to a narrative account of ten centuries of events.

Similar observations can be made regarding modern times: «France and Europe in the time of Napoleon», «France, a great colonising and world power in the XIXth century», «decolonisation» in the XXth century.

Studying the history of France therefore involves constantly and necessarily relating it to that of other countries, in different sectors: trade, wars, unions.

Thus the notions of society, culture, civilisation make their appearance:

- Society is regarded as a group of individuals living in an organised community, in control of a particular territory (cf Paul Ricoeur, Temps et Récit T.1). This implies:

- that a society is defined by its locality;

- that it provides itself with institutions which determine the status and role of the individual;

- that it endeavours to live forever, which is reflected in the rites and representations of love and death (among other things).

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(1) ELCOs = Enseignments de langue et culture d'origine
(Mother tongue and culture of origin teachers)

A society therefore has a culture, that is to say a collection of all the acquisitions derived from a social creation, involved in individual use by virtue of being transmitted: they are found in language, writings, techniques, art, attitudes, religious and philosophical beliefs etc.

The great figures of history are therefore civilisations (to quote F Braudel), those organised areas shaped by man. The problem of history is precisely the meeting of these civilisations. That is to say again that there is no history which is not intercultural.

Pedagogical implementation

In the time allotted to this subject (one hour weekly in the CP, two hours in the CE and the CM), teaching is divided into two distinct but complementary parts: narration and topic.

A third of the time is allotted to topics. A topic is determined, within the period studied, by a problem area and and amount of time (6 to 8 hours). The pupil works on documentary material, then constructs history and acquires a method of analysis.

For the rest of the time, the teacher gives a narrative account of a given period.

We must dwell a moment on the word «narrative». There is no history without narrative. Here again I refer to the work of Paul Ricoeur (Temps et Récit T1, T2, T3). I should like to say briefly, in the time remaining to me, that the work of the historian is nothing other than the narration of the largest possible number of events; having assembled as much evidence as possible he establishes laws of probability which give us an understanding of the period. He cannot «explain» the past. By contriving a plot he establishes mediations between temporalities and human experience, mediations between events, between individual facts and history taken as a whole.

Time becomes human, historical insofar as it is articulated in narrative form. On the other hand, narrative is significant insofar as it sketches the features of temporal experience. Narrative consists therefore in understanding a period of history in its successive phases and seeing in the interconnections and interactions of the phases the factors making for the acceptance of a conclusion which was far from predictable. The narrative in fact presents itself as a synthesis of heterogeneous elements.

It is in this context, rich in methodological assumption (cf the topic) in the tradition of the French schools of history and epistemology (cf the narrative in the tradition of the anglo-saxon schools) that series of pedogogical exercises, conducted by teachers and ELCOs, are introduced.

Let me give as an example the work done in history in the Argenteuil district, whose IDEN is Jean Gaillard. This work is connected with the Council of Europe project. The object, we repeat, is to take an intercultural approach in implementing the official curricula.

We accordingly constructed a topic on chronology for CE2 pupils. We thought it important, before dealing with the identification of the great periods of history, to dwell a moment on the calendar: why do we say we are in 1986? Is it 1986 everywhere? Again, are the pattern of school time, with its holidays, and the pattern of «French» time the only patterns which the pupils know? From a comparative study of calendars we can objectivise the social practices of time. The work consists in explaining in detail the French, Moslem and Jewish calendars. If we look at the way days, weeks and months are counted and divided up, at the names given to the months and days, at the civil and religious, fixed and moveable holidays, we see time as a construct of civilisation. There are several ways of ordering time and every society punctuates it with signposts that have meaning for that society; this is why we have introduced a third calendar, the Jewish calendar, though obviously we need not stop there.

It is the same approach which has lead us to define, together with elementary school teachers and the ELCO (who takes part in the history «courses», thus approaching the learning of the language and culture of origin in interaction with French culture) the history topics for the other class levels: the merchants of the middle ages for CM1, or the study of the lifestyles of the French from 1950 to our day in CM2, a study through which the actual lives of the pupils are taken into account, going beyong the «folklore» aspects and seeing them as factors for the understanding of a particular society: French society in 1986.

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Work in groups, led by Jean-Claude Canton

Analysis and exploitation of the Threshold Level

The work was conducted in two stages:

- discovering by trial and error how the tool worked

- establishing a project common to schoolmasters and ELCOs on the basis of an educational situation to be determined.

So the purpose was to reinvest the theoretical contribution of the papers given, by endeavouring to construct an intercultural project. Daniel Coste pointed out that originally the Threshold Level had been a working tool for adults, and had been rewritten for schoolchildren. It had to serve to formulate learning objectives. It was now necessary to put it into perspective and review its validity: is it a useable tool? Are there others involving new problem areas?

Jean-Claude Canton pointed out that it was not a textbook for direct use but a reference tool to be «applied pedagogically», according to the authors themselves.

Study of the document raised a series of questions concerning its structure, classification of ideas, underlying grammar, concept of the speech act etc. To find the answers to these questions we needed information over a long period of time. So only one of the two groups would study the components of a communication situation (Threshold Level) and would then envisage the exploitation of the same situation in two languages, in connection with the editing of a newspaper and a study of ports. It was hoped that the hreshold evel would then be put in «pedagogic» form to turn it into a computerised tool which could be used by the children themselves.

The other group preferred to study arrangements for possible co-operation between French teachers and ELCOs. This gave rise to a fruitful exchange of ideas, which brought out the difficulties, contradictions and limitations. Teaching the language of origin certainly had priority under the terms of the governmental instructions, according to the Algerian and Portuguese authorities. However, according to the Portuguese educational director, co-operation with French teachers was possible in the cultural field and could be achieved institutionally if it was programmed in at the beginning of the year and if the teachers wanted it. Examples were given of common achievements. Elsewhere, on the contrary, it seemed that institutional obstacles had prevented implementation of the jointly planned projects.

As a general rule, integration of the ELCOs was still very often superficial even if, in many cases, they had formed friendly relations with the French teachers. However, the overall effect of the courses in the language and culture of origin since 1981 had led the teachers to question the intercultural approach in the day-to-day practice of their profession.

Rapporteur's comments

The «deviation» of the second group from the proposed working objective showed that the exchange was felt to be a necessity. The course offered an opportunity to meet the ELCO educational officers, to obtain detailed information from them and to compare situations. This appeared to some to be a more pressing need than to construct a project which they believed to be remote from the conditions obtaining in their «field». Interest in the document «the threshold level» would no doubt have been shown more directly if research into learning objectives had required recourse to such a tool. But, there again, such a situation was perhaps hardly conceivable in a national course, unless it was composed of groups who came from the same «field». This again raised the problem of transfers posed by Louis Porcher.

Summary of course

It consisted in drawing up projects for training activities, the course members being grouped in accordance with their functions:

- Educational officers of the ELCOs (teachers of languages and cultures of origin)

- CEFISEM tutors (centres for training and information on the schooling of migrant children)

- PEN (Teachers' training college tutors)

Proposals of the ELCO educational officers

This group gave an account of its difficulties and constraints, whether institutional, economic or even relational: objectives set for their activities, time allowed for them too short or too rigidly fixed, insufficient information, isolation etc. In these circumstances an intercultural project could for the moment only be devised on an individual basis, giving rise to ad hoc action with the staff in situ.

The group therefore wanted intercultural education to be covered by the texts. They wished to be informed both of the Dublin resolution and of the recommendations of the Council of Europe, but also, at regional or departmental level, of the training activities, which the CEFISEMs could tell them about.

They would also like to attend the initial teacher training course.

Proposals of the CEFISEM tutors

They contemplated introducing the work topic of this session in courses for teachers undergoing further training and for representatives of associations who organised support schemes for foreign children (AEPS).

Objective: to make teachers ready to listen to the children.

Measures:

- Create a shock situation, which would bring home to participants their ethnocentrism (the variety of the target group could be one component of this situation),

- Theoretical contribution

- Real contact of participants with the field, in the form, for example, of meetings with foreign families.

- Production of educational dossiers on the basis of the official instructions or documents such as the threshold level.

Proposals of teachers training school staff

Further education courses for established teachers and ELCOs working in the same sector.

Objective: to set up mixed educational teams to draw up projects which introduce the intercultural approach into school subjects. The common theme could be, for example, the concept of time in French, mathematics and music.

Types of activity

- experiencing production situations in each school subject

- analysing and theorising on situations arising during the course

- relating them to the practices of the course members

- drawing up an educational project to be carried out in the course members' field.

Debate

The debate conducted by the organisers dealt primarily with the title of the course and with its follow-up, thus linking the original objectives to those which could now be envisaged.

- The title of the course: «Recognition of cultural diversity» did not include the term «intercultural» on which some participants still had doubts - and indeed suggested it should be defined in writing - while others hesitated to use it because they feared it was not legitimate or justified.

The discussion showed that there was no contradiction in terms but that extension of the «intercultural» concept posed a problem of comprehension. The title of the course reflected the concern shown in the instructions and curricula for elementary schools and by the Conference of Ministers of National Eduation. Taking the plurality of cultures into account in the teaching of school subjects contributed to better integration not only of foreign children but, more generally, of children with difficulties.

- After the course

Attention was called to the specific role which the IDENs (under-represented among the participants) could have, both as directors and co-ordinators of intercultural projects and in relaying, pursuing and publicising the action undertaken.

The course just held was a national course. The variety of the participants was an advantage, but meant that reference to the field was diluted. It would therefore appear necessary, though not sufficient, to hold another course; it would be useful to supplement it with academic courses.

- Requests for information

In addition to the request by the ELCOs to be informed of the Dublin resolution and the recommendations of the Council of Europe to member countries, all course members expressed the hope that the texts governing the teaching of various languages of origin should be distributed. This would help to remove many prejudices.

It was also hoped that the information collected by the CEFISEMs and the educational material which they were producing together with teachers should be widely disseminated.

Rapporteur's comments

The aim of the organisers had been to intersperse periods for reflection, practical activities and discussions between the weighty formal papers. They also wanted to reformulate progressively the training tasks of the course members. The organisational plan of the course and the final proposals reflected these two concerns.

As one of the participants pointed out, the title of the course did not include the term «intercultural», which had been introduced on a hypothetical basis and analysed by Louis Porcher in his address on the first day and was the concept around which our study had revolved. It was significant that the word had been the subject of the last questions asked, both in the discussions within groups and in the final debate. It would seem therefore that the meaning of the term was still not settled.

No less significant was the fact that the term had been left out of the title of the course, that Louis Porcher at the beginning and the organisers at the end had declined to propose any definition of it and that the analyses by Michel Field had more or less demolished it. This did not seem, or no longer seemed, to be the problem.

The problem appeared to lie, as Michelle Huart had said and as the speakers and organisers had constantly demonstrated, in the day-to-day work of the classroom, through the pupils themselves and through what the teacher presumably knew how to do, namely, teach the school subjects.

On the pupil's side, the diversity of the cultures concerned revealed, «under the magnifying glass», as was said, the processes and the difficulties of learning. On the teacher's side, all serious thought on school subjects resulted in outlooks and approaches which could only be of an intercultural nature. Recognising the diversity of cultures was not a sort of luxury giving rise to peripheral activities; it was an intrinsic dimension of the subjects taught in schools. This was demonstrable and the speakers had endeavoured to demonstrate it. But to do this one must have perceived, if not measured, one's own ethnocentricity. That was no doubt why, in their projects for action, despite the questions which they were still impatient to ask, many course members had included procedures designed to get training staff to take an objective view of their own cultural «position», as a prerequisite, or rather as a dynamic exploration, indispensable to any thinking of an educational nature. That could be the beginning of a genuine change in our practices.

LIST OF COURSE MEMBERS

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Aix-Marseille	Bouches du Rhône	BALENCI Antoine	Instituteur	MIRFOEN	CEFISEM Marseille
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Caen	Calvados	DUTILLEUX Geneviève	Prof Cert	Prof ENI	Ecole Normale Caen
Creteil	Seine Saint Denis	HIU Janine	Prof Cert	Prof EN	Ecole Normale Livry-Gargan
Créteil	Seine et Marne	LEFEVRE Claudine	Prof Cert	Prof EN	Ecole Normale Melun
Lille	Nord	SAIMI Claudine	Prof Cert	Prof ENI	Ecole Normale Douai
Lille	Nord	BERNARD Alain	Instituteur	MF	Ecole Normale Douai
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